

aids is by far the most popular. According to a June 30 Morning Consult poll, adding dental, vision, and hearing benefits to Medicare is supported by 84 percent of the American people. It is not often you get 84 percent of the American people supporting anything. And yet that includes 89 percent of Democrats, 79 percent of Republicans. This is what the American people want, and this is what we must deliver for them.

Given that, it is just hard for me to imagine that any Member of the House or Senate would oppose this very popular and important provision.

It is a bit embarrassing that our Nation, the richest on Earth, is the only major country not to guarantee paid family and medical leave. I have been all over this country, and I have met with women—low-income women—who are forced to go back to work 1 week after having their baby because they need the income. We are the only major country on Earth not to guarantee paid family and medical leave, not to make sure that a mom can stay home with her sick kid or a dad can spend time with his dying father or mother.

This legislation finally does what should have been done a long, long time ago and guarantees paid family and medical leave.

And what this legislation does is address the reality that many of our younger people are unable to obtain the good-paying jobs that are out there because they lack the ability to get a higher education.

Now, my own view is we should make public colleges and universities tuition free. My own view is we should cancel all student debt in this country. That is not in this bill. But what is in this bill is the reality that every American will have the right to get at least 2 years of community college tuition free. And they can use that to get the training they need for jobs. They can use that to accumulate credits that can be transferred to a 4-year college, if that is what they desire.

A few blocks away from here and in every major city in America, there are Americans sleeping out on the streets. They are veterans. They are people with all kinds of issues. They are working people who simply cannot afford the housing in their community. Two blocks away from the U.S. Capitol there is an encampment of homeless people. Six hundred thousand Americans are homeless today, and on top of that, we have some 18 million households that spend 50 percent of their limited incomes on housing.

In other words, we have a major housing crisis. This legislation addresses that, and, in an unprecedented manner, invests in low-income and affordable housing. And when we do that, by the way, we create a whole lot of good-paying jobs.

We are an aging society. And whether people have severe disabilities or whether they are just getting old, peo-

ple would rather stay at home in many cases rather than be forced into nursing homes. What our legislation will do is to significantly improve home healthcare in this country and make sure that those people who provide that important service, that difficult service, are adequately compensated, because today they are not. We need more of those workers, and we need to pay them decent wages.

I am sadly aware that many of my Republican colleagues do not believe that climate change is real or, at the very least, don't believe that we should do anything about it. But they are dead wrong. In my view, we cannot go home and look our children and grandchildren in the eye knowing what we know and knowing that the scientists are telling us that we have a very, very few years to address the climate crisis or else there will be irreparable harm done in our country and around the world.

We have turned on the TV this past summer, and we saw the unbelievable fires in Oregon and California and learned that in Siberia their fires were larger than all the other fires combined; smoke went thousands of miles. We learned that July was the hottest month ever and that climate is exacerbating extreme weather disturbances like Hurricane Ida, which brought havoc to Louisiana.

This legislation that we are proposing does not go as far as I think it should on climate. But make no mistake about it. It is a major, major step forward in transforming our energy system away from fossil fuel to energy efficiency and sustainable energy.

So that is where we are right now. We are at a moment where millions and millions of Americans have lost faith in their government. They think that we are incapable of addressing their needs, that all we do is listen to wealthy campaign contributors and the lobbyists and the billionaire class.

The question we face right now is, At this moment, do we have the courage to keep faith with the American people and show them that their democracy in fact can work for them and not just powerful special interests?

So let us go forward. Let us do the right thing. Let us pass this \$3½ trillion reconciliation package.

With that, I yield the floor.

#### VOTE ON BIANCHI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bianchi nomination?

Mr. SANDERS. I would ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 377 Ex.]

#### YEAS—85

Baldwin	Hagerty	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Risch
Blackburn	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Blunt	Hoeven	Sanders
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Brown	Inhofe	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Capito	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lee	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lujan	Sullivan
Collins	Lummis	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Marshall	Toomay
Cramer	McConnell	Van Hollen
Crapo	Menendez	Warner
Daines	Merkley	Warnock
Duckworth	Moran	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Young
Graham	Padilla	
Grassley	Peters	

#### NAYS—11

Boozman	Hawley	Scott (FL)
Braun	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Paul	Tuberville
Cruz	Rubio	

#### NOT VOTING—4

Feinstein	Kennedy
Johnson	Rounds

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 241, Daniel J. Krittenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

Charles E. Schumer, Robert Menendez, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Debbie Stabenow, Catherine Cortez Masto, Christopher A. Coons, Ron Wyden, Margaret Wood Hassan, Edward J. Markey, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Elizabeth Warren, Angus S. King, Jr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs), shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. FEINSTEIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 77, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 378 Ex.]

#### YEAS—77

Baldwin	Hassan	Reed
Barrasso	Heinrich	Risch
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Romney
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Blunt	Hoeven	Sanders
Booker	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Brown	Inhofe	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kelly	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Shelby
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Leahy	Smith
Collins	Lujan	Stabenow
Coons	Lummis	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Toomey
Crapo	Merkley	Van Hollen
Daines	Moran	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Fischer	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Wicker
Graham	Padilla	Wyden
Grassley	Peters	
Hagerty	Portman	

#### NAYS—18

Blackburn	Ernst	Paul
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Lankford	Sasse
Cassidy	Lee	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Marshall	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville

#### NOT VOTING—5

Burr	Johnson	Rounds
Feinstein	Kennedy	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 77, the nays are 18.

The motion is agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (East Asian and Pacific Affairs).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### NORD STREAM 2

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I want to talk today about Russia. I want to talk

about Vladimir Putin. I want to describe to this Chamber a bipartisan victory that together we won, and then I want to describe, tragically, how President Joe Biden is giving that victory away to Putin and Russia.

To understand this issue, we need to go back to the summer of 2019. In the summer of 2019, Russia was in the process of constructing a pipeline called the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline.

Behind me is a map demonstrating where the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline runs. It is a pipeline that was to run from Russia to Germany, going underneath the Baltic Sea.

In the summer of 2019, the pipeline was nearly complete. At various periods in time, it was 70 percent complete, 80 percent complete. There was widespread consensus that if this pipeline were completed, it would have devastating consequences. In a few minutes, I will discuss those consequences in greater detail. But in an effort to stop the devastating consequences, I worked on bipartisan legislation, along with Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN, Democrat from New Hampshire, and we introduced bipartisan sanctions legislation designed to stop the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline.

That legislation, when we introduced it, was almost immediately subject to a Russian disinformation campaign. In Europe, the Russians were saying to anyone who would listen that the Cruz-Shaheen sanction legislation could never pass; that there was no way Congress would come together in a bipartisan manner to stop the Nord Stream 2; that it was hopeless; that no one needed to be concerned that this legislation could pass. They also made the argument as part of their disinformation campaign that the pipeline was nearly complete so that U.S. sanctions could not stop it. There was nothing that could be done to stop it.

Well, to the surprise of nobody who follows these issues, that Russian disinformation was precisely that—it was disinformation. It was lies.

In the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator SHAHEEN and I worked with our colleagues, and our legislation was initially voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 20 to 2—overwhelming bipartisan support.

At that point, Senator SHAHEEN and I began working to get it passed on the floor of the Senate. While we were doing so, the Russian disinformation continued: This cannot pass.

We endeavored to have our sanctions legislation attached to the National Defense Authorization Act, which was moving in the fall and winter of 2019. To do so was not easy. To do so, we needed to get the explicit signoff of the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We needed the explicit signoff of the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. We needed the explicit signoff

of the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee. Then we needed the explicit signoff of Senator MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER, the Republican and Democratic leader respectively. All eight of those Senators needed to agree with our legislation for this to proceed on the NDAA.

And then we had to do the exact same thing in the House of Representatives and get the chairman and ranking member on Foreign Relations, on Armed Services and on Banking, and we had to get the signoff of NANCY PELOSI and KEVIN MCCARTHY.

To get the explicit support of all 16 of those congressional leaders—8 Republicans and 8 Democrats—in any world is not easy.

And I will say on my part and Senator SHAHEEN's part, we invested dozens, if not hundreds, of hours in terms of talking to our colleagues to build that bipartisan consensus, and we ended up getting that overwhelming support. In many ways, that support was miraculous.

Why is that?

Well, one of the reasons why Nord Stream 2 is particularly problematic is that Russia is building Nord Stream 2 in order to cut off Ukraine. There is currently a pipeline running through Ukraine and, through Nord Stream 2, Russia has the power to starve Ukraine.

Why is it miraculous in December of 2019 that we were able to pass this legislation?

Well, if you will recall what was happening in the House of Representatives in December of 2019, the House of Representatives was in the middle of impeaching President Donald Trump for alleged high crimes and misdemeanors concerning Ukraine.

If you will recall, from the trial we held on this Senate floor, central to the allegations that were raised by Democrats against President Trump was conduct concerning Ukraine.

It remains astonishing that right in the middle of a partisan gladiatorial battle concerning Ukraine, simultaneously we were able to get Republicans and Democrats to work hand-in-hand to agree with complete consensus that we were going to come together and stop the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. We were going to stop what Vladimir Putin was doing.

In December of 2019, our legislation passed. The Cruz-Shaheen sanctions legislation passed. Now, I will remind you what the Russian disinformation did when we first introduced it. They said it will never pass; and they said, even if it does pass, it is too late for it to have any effect.

Well, if my memory serves me correctly, President Trump signed the Cruz-Shaheen sanctions legislation at 7 p.m. on a Thursday. At 6:45 p.m. on a Thursday, 15 minutes before our sanctions legislation was signed into law, the company that was laying the pipeline in the Baltic Sea announced it had immediately halted laying the pipeline